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ABSTRACT

Research indicates that the media play a role in shaping the information that voters have about election options. Knowledge of those options has been related to actual vote, but has not been shown to be strongly related to uncertainty. Uncertainty, however, does seem to motivate voters to engage in communication activities, some of which may influence their voting decisions. Data gathered in a telephone survey of registered voters prior to elections in Columbus, Ohio, in November 1983 were used to determine the role of knowledge and uncertainty in voter decision making. Results indicated that high media use led to knowledge of pro and con arguments about issues and candidates, and that such knowledge was predictive of voting intentions. Voters high in such knowledge were less uncertain in their electoral choices. Voters' motivations for following the campaign, however, did not act as contingent conditions for the media use, knowledge, and uncertainty linkage. (FL)

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ELECTORAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNCERTAINTY

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A B S T R A C T

Data from the November 1983 elections in Columbus, Ohio, are used to test a voter motivation model. The data show high media use leads to knowledge of pro and con arguments being made about issues and candidates and that such knowledge is predictive of voting intentions. Voters high in such knowledge are less uncertain in their electoral choices. Voters' motivations to follow the campaign, however, do not act as contingent conditions for the media use, knowledge and uncertainty linkage.

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Electoral Knowledge and Uncertainty

Research during the past two years examining the link between voting intentions and the learning of political arguments has shown a consistent pattern. Across a variety of elections, data have been presented which indicate that voters favor issue positions and candidates about which they have the most supportive information. Conversely, voters reject positions and candidates about which they hold a preponderance of negative information. Significantly, media use and media content have been tentatively linked to the learning of these pro and con arguments.

Another potential consequence of the acquisition of information which has recently come under study is decisional certainty. By acquiring information voters would be expected to gain the materials of which certainty is made. This second consequence of learning of political arguments, which has received only mixed support in the research to date, is the subject of the report to follow.

Previous Research

Campaign Media Use and Knowledge:

Data from two studies (Becker, Blood and Greenwald, 1984) show strong support for the link between vote choice and voters' knowledge of pro and con type political arguments. What voters know about political issues is strongly related to how they intend to vote on those issues (or candidates). Further, usual measures of media use are more highly related to traditional measures of public affairs knowledge than to knowledge of pro and con type arguments. However, campaign specific measures of media use are related to the pro and con type knowledge measures.

Becker, et al.,(1984) demonstrated that voters knowledge of pro and con type arguments largely comes from the mass media. Using campaign specific measures of media use and content analysis, the researchers showed data linking arguments held by voters and media mediated information. What voters know about issues is shaped by the media, but not in a simple manner. Voters' understanding of issues is influenced by the media, yet the vocabulary of the media and the vocabulary of the voters differs, especially for negative arguments. Voters seem to translate media fare into terms with which they feel most comfortable.

Previously, Becker and Dunwoody (1982) had shown a strong relationship between knowledge about nonpartisan candidates in a city election and vote. Using data from a mayoral and council races, the researchers demonstrated that voters were more likely to be able to provide information about

candidates they supported than about alternate candidates. Dunwoody and Becker (1981) found that knowledge of pro and con arguments about a state referendum predicted vote. Voters supporting the referendum were more likely to be able to cite pro than con arguments about the referendum. Becker and Krendl (1983) replicated this finding using data from two local ballot issues. This program of research has been reviewed by Becker and Blood (1984).

In a related program of research, Sanders and Atwood (1975) found that voters' "decisional agendas" predicted vote. These "agendas" were measures of voters likes and dislikes of candidates. Related findings have been reported by Hantz and Kimsey (1976) and Kimsey and Hantz (1978). Hantz and Chalfa (1983) reported a link between "decisional agendas" and media use. Although the data were not consistent across various measures of "decisional" agenda," the study strongly suggests the importance of media information and interpersonal communication in shaping "decisional agendas."

Knowledge and Uncertainty:

Separately, Becker and Demers (1982) and Becker and Blood (1983) have explored the relationship between knowledge of alternatives in voting situations and the uncertainty surrounding those decisions. To date, the findings have been more confusing than enlightening.

Becker and Demers, for example, were unable to link uncertainty with media use or with a stated need for information. Becker and Blood, on the other hand, found some evidence that uncertainty is a product of low levels of media use and that uncertainty motivates voters to subsequently use the media. Uncertainty was thought to be a product of low levels of knowledge, however, and the data did not show strong support for such a conclusion. Rather the data seemed to suggest that knowledge produced uncertainty only for types of voters, perhaps those with a basic interest in a decision or belief in its importance.

McCombs and Weaver (1973) and Weaver (1980), working under a different theoretical framework, have argued that uncertainty must be viewed in conjunction with interest.

This concern with the motivational consequences of information brings the two research activities reviewed above full circle. The available data show that the media play a role, though not the only role, in shaping the information voters have about arguments for and against election options. Knowledge of those options has been related to actual vote. Knowledge has

not been shown to be strongly related to uncertainty, while uncertainty does seem to motivate voters to engage in communication activities, some of which may have impact on voting decisions.

Research Questions

The expectations guiding the research which follows were rather straightforward. Persons who use the media, particularly the relevant political content of those media, were expected to be more knowledgeable about election issues and specifically about the pro and con arguments which were being made for various election issues and candidates.

Knowledge is expected to reduce uncertainty about electoral choices. Those persons who have high levels of knowledge were expected to be more likely to have made choices and more likely to feel confident about those choices. The choices made by these individuals were expected to be a function of the information held, that is, those persons with largely supportive information should support issues and candidates while those with largely unsupportive information should oppose selected issues and candidates.

Uncertainty is viewed as motivating, so that those persons high in uncertainty should be expected to desire additional information about the candidates and issues on the ballot. The information would be sought to reduce the uncertainty, since, as noted, information is viewed as uncertainty reducing.

This set of expectations, however, is expected to hold only for those individuals motivated to vote in the elections. In other words, for those individuals who do not believe the elections are of importance, media use is not expected to be strongly related to knowledge of arguments, since these individuals will not be motivated to process and retain relevant materials from the media. Similarly, individuals not motivated to vote in the contests ought not experience uncertainty as a result of low levels of information. For them, uncertainty has been eliminated by the decision to opt out of or give little importance to the election itself. These expectations are summarized in Figure 1.

Design

A telephone survey of 657 registered voters in Columbus, Ohio, was conducted prior to the 1983 November elections. Respondents were randomly selected from voter registration lists and interviewed between Oct. 3 and 14 by trained student interviewers under the supervision of the first two authors. The response rate was 71.8% of those with listed telephone

numbers, or 61.3% overall.

The November ballot contained a highly publicized and controversial amendment to cut back state taxes to what they were on Jan. 1, 1983. The amendment, which was coupled with another to change the number of votes needed in the legislature to enact new taxes, was opposed by the governor, who had pushed through a new tax package after coming to office in 1983. Though early polls showed both amendments passing, they were defeated in November after an almost certain reversal of public opinion.

The November ballot also included the Columbus mayoral contest as well as the election of council members and members of the city school board.

Respondents in the October survey were asked several questions about their media use, including the number of days they viewed local television news, listened to radio news, and read the local newspapers.

Campaign media use was measured by asking respondents if they had been paying attention to news stories about the mayoral race and paying attention to news stories about the tax-repeal issue. Respondents also were asked how frequently they discussed (Interpersonal Discussion) the mayoral race with their family and friends. A similar question was asked about the tax-repeal issue.

Several strategies were used to measure voter knowledge. First, voters were asked to identify five local politicians, including the two mayoral candidates (labeled in the tables as Knowledge 1). Secondly, voters were told the names of the two mayoral candidates, and then for each candidate were asked: "What, if anything, can you tell me about X?" (labeled Knowledge 2). Thirdly, voters were asked to list the strengths and then the weaknesses of each of the mayoral candidates. The summed score for pieces of information provided was labeled here as Knowledge 3. For the tax-repeal issue, voters were asked to list arguments for the repeal and then arguments against the repeal. This additive index is labeled Knowledge 4.

Uncertainty was measured by asking registered voters if they had made up their minds about the mayoral race and the tax-repeal issue and, if so, how difficult it was to make that decision (labeled here as Decisional Difficulty) and how likely it was that they would change that decision (labeled Likelihood of Change). In both cases, those respondents who had not made up their minds how to vote were automatically placed in the most uncertain position, that is, given the highest score on Decisional Difficulty and the highest score on Likelihood of Change.

Motivation to seek additional information (Information Need) was measured by asking respondents whether they would like to know more about how the mayoral candidates stood on issues, more about the candidates'

backgrounds, and more about what the candidates would do once elected. Three similar questions were used for the tax repeal issue. Respondents were asked whether they wanted to know more about the arguments for and against the issue, more about who supports the issue, and more about how the amendments would work in practice.

To measure how motivated the candidates were to vote (Importance of Vote), respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement: It doesn't make any difference who wins the (mayoral) election; It doesn't matter whether the constitutional (tax) amendment is passed or defeated.

Results

Table 1 shows support for the expectation that media use is related positively to knowledge. The relationship between use and knowledge is strongest for newspaper readership among the general media use habits and, among these, strongest for the traditional measure of political figures. Radio use seems to make no real contribution to an understanding of the political environment, while television use contributes inconsistently.

The measures of attention to specific campaign materials, not surprisingly, show the strongest relationships with the measures of knowledge. The relationships, while modest in absolute terms, are larger than those identified in earlier research for the nontraditional knowledge measures used here. Given the expectations that these relationships should be contingent on motivation to follow the campaign, they are all the more interesting.

Interpersonal discussion about the campaign, considered here in the media use area rather than separately (because the fodder of discussion almost certainly comes from the media), is a consistent predictor of knowledge.

As a point of comparison, correlations between media use and formal education are shown in the bottom of Table 1. These relationships are slightly lower than the specific media measures and about equal to those for interpersonal discussion.

Before turning to the next set of relationships in the model--between knowledge and uncertainty--a diversionary examination of the interrelationships of the various measures of these two concepts was undertaken. In Table 2, the correlations between the knowledge measures are shown. All of the knowledge measures are strongly related, it is quite clear, with the strongest relationships shown between the somewhat similar measures of candidate characteristics and candidate strengths and weaknesses. Table 3 shows the extremely high relationships between the two

measures of uncertainty. These measures each employ as their base the decision to vote, as those persons without such a decision were labeled most uncertain, while gradations of certainty were achieved for those with a decision via the questions on decisional difficulty and likelihood of change. Despite the similarity empirically, the decision was made to retain these as distinct measures in subsequent tables because of their conceptual distinctiveness and the desire to replicate the key relationships.

The data in Table 4 show support for the hypothesis that voters with more knowledge should be less uncertain. Voters who can cite mayoral candidate strengths and weaknesses report less difficulty in making their voting choice and are less likely to say they will change their vote. The same relationship holds for those voters who can identify the political figures and for those who have general knowledge of the candidates. The expected negative relationships between knowledge and uncertainty also hold for the tax-repeal issue, although they aren't quite as strong.

Table 5 shows correlations between the uncertainty measures and an index of information created by simply summing the three separate questions discussed above. Those voters reporting difficulty in deciding between the two mayoral candidates as well as those reporting that they could change the decision already made were more likely to express an interest in additional information about the candidates--their stands on the issues, their personal characteristics, and what they would do if elected. Similar relationships hold for the uncertainty measures used for the tax repeal issue. Voters uncertain about that decision were more likely to be interested in additional information--about arguments for and against it, about persons favoring it, and about how it would work in practice. Though none of the relationships in Table 5 is strong, the pattern is consistent.

In summary, the data examined to this point show support for the model presented, even without the controls which were hypothesized to be necessary for the relationships to surface clearly. Those controls were introduced in the tables which follow to determine what impact, if any, they had on the established relationships.

In Table 6, the relationships between media use and the various knowledge measures are reexamined. Here the data are presented separately for those persons believing the issue before them on the ballot was unimportant, important, or of uncertain importance. The uncontrolled relationships had been presented in Table 1.

Overall, the entries in Table 6 show no support for the notion that

vote motivation or the importance voters assigned to the election had any impact on the relationships between media use and knowledge. For only one set of relationships--between interpersonal discussion and knowledge of arguments for and against the tax repeal issue--is the pattern as expected. That finding must be treated as inconsequential.

A similar pattern is reported in Table 7, which parallels Table 4. There is no consistent evidence that the control for perceived importance of the election is of any consequence in understanding the relationships between knowledge and uncertainty.

Evidence of the significance of voter beliefs about the importance of the election comes from an analysis of panel data gathered for some of the respondents. In late October, 124 of those persons interviewed in early October were reinterviewed. This represented 84.9% of those contacted for the reinterview. Using data from these respondents, it was possible to extend the model presented here another step and look at the relationship between need for information and actual use of media late in the campaign. These data show overall a slight and negative relationships between reported information need in October and reports of attention paid to media coverage of the tax repeal issue and discussion of that issue subsequent to the first interview. Such a finding is in conflict with data presented for similar measures by Becker and Blood (1983). But a closer analysis, using the importance of vote measure as a control, show the need to use relationship suppressed. For those respondents who felt the tax issue was unimportant, the relationship was strongly negative (r=-.48), while for those saying they didn't know if it was important, it was strongly positive (.36). Need was unrelated to use for those who said the election was important. It is worth noting that the measure of importance of voting for the particularly issues isn't strongly related to uncertainty. Only slight differences exist between those who agreed and disagreed with the statement about election importance and having actually made a decision on the mayoral race and the tax repeal issue.

Data are presented in Figures 2 and 3 linking knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates and pro and con arguments on the tax repeal issue with reported vote intention. These data demonstrate once again the power of those measures in explaining the vote decision. Figure 2 shows clear differences between those with imbalanced negative and positive information sets in terms of planned vote. Those with balanced information were between these other groups, as were those with no information. The latter group, of course, was more likely to be undecided.

Figure 3 is more complex, because of the strategy of measuring strengths and weaknesses of both candidates, and the cell sizes are minute in places. Yet the pattern is remarkably clear. Comparisons among the three categories labeled A in the figure show the effect of negative, balanced, and positive information regarding the Republican candidate where no information about the Democratic candidate was present. The three B groups show the same effect, this time where no information on the Republican candidate was present, while negative, balanced and positive information on Democratic candidate was available. In the last of these cases (positive information regarding the Democrat and no information regarding the Republican), no individuals voted for the Republican.

The four C cells are conflicting, in that the information would lead to a stand-off. Something of the sort occurs here, with these four cells producing moderate support for the Republican.

Cells D1 and D2 provide the strongest contrast conceptually. D1 represents situation where negative information dominates for the Democrat while positive information dominates for the Republican. D2 reverses that situation in that positive information is stored for the Democrat and negative for the Republican. Empirically, D1 and D2 provide the most distinct contrast, reflecting the conceptual distinction.

E and F cells involve balanced cells and produce nearly identical contrasts. As such they show that balanced information wins out over negative information, while positive information wins out over balanced information.

The data also show that persons who are undecided about their vote on the tax-repeal issue comprise 49.4 percent of those with no knowledge of pro and con type arguments about the issue. In contrast, the undecided voters comprise only 26.0 percent of those with negative arguments, 16.7 percent of those with an equal number of pro and con arguments, and 16.2 percent of those with supportive information about the issue. Similarly, for the mayoral election, undecided voters comprise 75.6 percent of those voters with no knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the Republican and Democrat candidates. In contrast, those voters with negative, positive or balanced information about the candidates strengths and weaknesses are far less likely to be undecided.

When this same strategy of dividing voters according to the type, rather than volume, of knowledge is employed in an analysis of uncertainty, we find, as Table 8 shows, that those persons with no knowledge are indeed

the most uncertain. About 56 percent of those with no knowledge about the tax-repeal issue report most difficulty in making a voting decision, and about 52 percent say they are likely to change their decision. Those persons with balanced information, who are, in fact, rather high in knowledge, are not high in uncertainty. Rather, this group is somewhat more certain about their vote than those persons who have mostly negative information. The balanced group, in fact, resembles the group with positive information rather than the group with disproportionately negative information. This finding is rather important when it is contrasted with Figure 2 for it suggests the balanced group has made a decision yet their balanced information environment does not prevent them from being certain about that decision. But it is not clear from the data at hand how they will actually vote.

Table 9 shows the same analysis for the mayoral election. Again, the cell sizes are minute in places but some interesting patterns do emerge. (For comparative purposes, the labeling of groups in Figure 3 is followed in Table 9).

For the A group, where there is no information on the Democrat, those voters with positive information on the Republican are most certain about their vote. These voters strongly supported the Republican. Those persons with negative information on the Republican, and no information on the Democrat, are most uncertain. In the B group, those with no information on the Republican but negative or positive information on the Democrat are most certain about their vote. The former group strongly supported the Republican while no one in the latter group supported the Republican candidate. For both A and B, no information on one candidate and balanced information on the other produces an almost even split in support for the two candidates with a correspondingly even split in terms of uncertainty.

The findings in Table 9 for the C group show that those voters with no information or negative information about both candidates are most uncertain. The balanced group reports least uncertainty about their voting decision, with the positive information group somewhat less certain about their vote. This pattern of differing voter uncertainty across the C group highlights the stand-off in conflicting information reflected in Figure 3.

The strong contrast reported in Figure 3 for the D group is mirrored in the analysis of uncertainty. Both groups report low uncertainty in their voting decision and report it is unlikely they will change that decision. A similar pattern emerges for the E and F groups where all groups report low uncertainty in voting decision and likelihood of vote change.

Summary and Conclusion

The data presented here are supportive of the general expectations about the linkage between knowledge and uncertainty outlined in Becker and Blood (1983) rather than the modification presented here. Media use leads to knowledge, which, in turn, leads to uncertainty. Uncertainty is motivating, leading to an interest in subsequent information. The motivations of the voters to follow the campaign, thought to be important in understanding the linkages between media use and knowledge and knowledge and uncertainty, did not play that role here.

Additional support for the original model is gained from an analyses of more distant relationships in the model in comparison with those presented. Specifically, the correlations between media use and uncertainty are considerably smaller (and often nonexistent) than those for knowledge to uncertainty, as would be expected given the placement of these concepts in the model. Similarly, the knowledge measures show slightly lower relationships with the motivation to seek information than do the uncertainty measures.

Figures 2 and 3, and the analyses presented in Tables 8 and 9, serve to emphasize the importance of understanding the information environment of the voters. The data presented here support the conclusion that this information both reduces uncertainty and leads to selection of a specific vote option over another. The decision process used by voters with balanced information about candidates and issues warrants further investigation.

The data indicate that Becker and Blood (1983) were premature is questioning the motivating role of information. Consistent with the conclusion reached in that research, there is evidence to keep information separate from measures of uncertainty in the analyses. Yet information does seem to play a role in determining whether voters will feel uncertain about election options.

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Figure 1

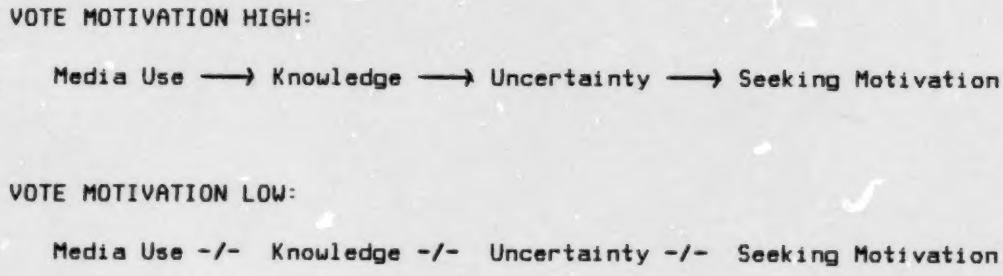

VOTE MOTIVATION HIGH:
Media Use ⟶ Knowledge ⟶ Uncertainty ⟶ Seeking Motivation
VOTE MOTIVATION LOW:
Media Use -/- Knowledge -/- Uncertainty -/- Seeking Motivation

Table 1.

Pearson correlation coefficients between media use, interpersonal discussion, education and voter knowledge.

	Knowledge 1	Knowledge 2	Knowledge 3	Knowledge 4
Local TV News Viewing	.14*	.04	.12*	-.04
Radio News Listening	.05	.06	.01	.03
Newspaper Readership	.34*	.19*	.26*	.11*
Campaign Media Use (a)	.36*	.37*	.42*	.33*
Interpersonal Discussion (a)	.19*	.24*	.28*	.25*
Education	.16*	.25*	.22*	.27*

Ns range from 637 to 657.

*p(.05, one-tailed test.

Knowledge 1 is a measure of ability to identify local political figures, including mayoral candidates. Knowledge 2 is a measure of ability to provide unstructured information about the two primary mayoral candidates, Knowledge 3 is a measure of ability to identify strengths and weaknesses of the two mayoral candidates, and Knowledge 4 is a measures of the ability to identify arguments for and against the tax repeal amendment.

(a)These measures were asked separately for the mayoral and tax repeal questions. The appropriate measures is employed in the row.

Table 2.

Pearson correlation coefficients among knowledge measures.

	Knowledge 1	Knowledge 2	Knowledge 3	Knowledge 4
Knowledge 1	--			
Knowledge 2	.48*	--		
Knowledge 3	.46*	.67*	--	
Knowledge 4	.31*	.38*	.44*	--

N=656.

*p(.05, one-tailed test.

Knowledge 1 is a measure of ability to identify local political figures, including mayoral candidates. Knowledge 2 is a measure of ability to provide unstructured information about the two primary mayoral candidates, Knowledge 3 is a measure of ability to identify strengths and weaknesses of the two mayoral candidates, and Knowledge 4 is a measures of the ability to identify arguments for and against the tax repeal amendment.

Table 3.

Pearson correlation coefficients among the uncertainty measures.

	Decisional Difficulty: Candidates	Decisional Difficulty: Issue
Likelihood of change: candidates	.94*	
Likelihood of change: issue		.91*

N=629 for candidate measures and 621 for issue measures.

*p(.05, one-tailed test.

Table 4.

Pearson correlation coefficients between knowledge and uncertainty measures.

	Knowledge 1	Knowledge 2	Knowledge 3	Knowledge 4
Decisional Difficulty (a)	-.34*	-.37*	-.43*	-.25*
Likelihood of change (a)	-.35*	-.39*	-.46*	-.28*

N=629.

p<.05, one-tailed test.

Knowledge 1 is a measure of ability to identify local political figures, including mayoral candidates. Knowledge 2 is a measure of ability to provide unstructured information about the two primary mayoral candidates, Knowledge 3 is a measure of ability to identify strengths and weaknesses of the two mayoral candidates, and Knowledge 4 is a measures of the ability to identify arguments for and against the tax repeal amendment.

(a)These measures were asked separately for the mayoral and tax repeal questions. The appropriate measure is employed in the row.

Table 5.

Pearson correlation coefficients between uncertainty measures and information need.

	Information Need:	Information Need:
Decisional Difficulty: Candidate	.24*	
Likelihood of change: Candidate	.23*	
Decisional Difficulty: Issue		.35*
Likelihood of Change: Issue		.29*

N=595 for the candidate column and 601 for the issue column.

p<.05, one-tailed test.

Table 6.

Pearson correlation coefficients between media use, interpersonal discussion and voter knowledge, controlling for importance of vote.

	Knowledge 1			Knowledge 2		
Vote:	Unimpt.	Impt.	DK	Unimpt.	Impt.	DK
Local TV News Viewing	.17*	.11*	.20*	.02	.03	.09
Radio News Listening	.08	.08	-.13	.16*	.06	-.10
Newspaper Readership	.36*	.30*	.41*	.15	.17*	.26*
Campaign Media Use (a)	.40*	.32*	.38*	.51*	.31*	.32*
Interpersonal Discussion (a)	.19*	.17*	.17*	.27*	.24*	.13
	Knowledge 3			Knowledge 4		
Local TV News Viewing	.11	.10*	.09	-.02	.15*	.21*
Radio News Listening	-.04	.01	-.10	.00	.02	.07
Newspaper Readership	.27*	.25*	.26*	.29*	.35*	.30*
Campaign Media Use (a)	.46*	.37*	.32*	.24*	.20*	.18*
Interpersonal Discussion (a)	.23*	.26*	.22*	-.08	.26*	.08

Ns are 117, 404 and 111 respectively for the first three knowledge measures and 48, 431 and 154 for Knowledge 4.

p(.05, one-tailed test.

Knowledge 1 is a measure of ability to identify local political figures, including mayoral candidates. Knowledge 2 is a measure of ability to provide unstructured information about the two primary mayoral candidates, Knowledge 3 is a measure of ability to identify strengths and weaknesses of the two mayoral candidates, and Knowledge 4 is a measures of the ability to identify arguments for and against the tax repeal amendment.

Table 7.

Pearson correlation coefficients between uncertainty and voter knowledge, controlling for importance of vote.

	Knowledge 1			Knowledge 2		
Vote:	Unimpt.	Impt.	DK	Unimpt.	Impt.	DK
Decisional Uncertainty (a)	-.25*	-.37*	-.29*	-.32*	-.36*	-.39*
Likelihood of change (a)	-.33*	-.36*	-.31*	-.40*	-.38*	-.41*
	Knowledge 3			Knowledge 4		
Decisional Uncertainty (a)	-.34*	-.44*	-.39*	-.09	-.20*	-.19*
Likelihood of change (a)	-.42*	-.46*	-.44*	-.10	-.22*	-.24*

Ns are 117, 404 and 111 respectively for the first three knowledge measures and 48, 431 and 154 for Knowledge 4.

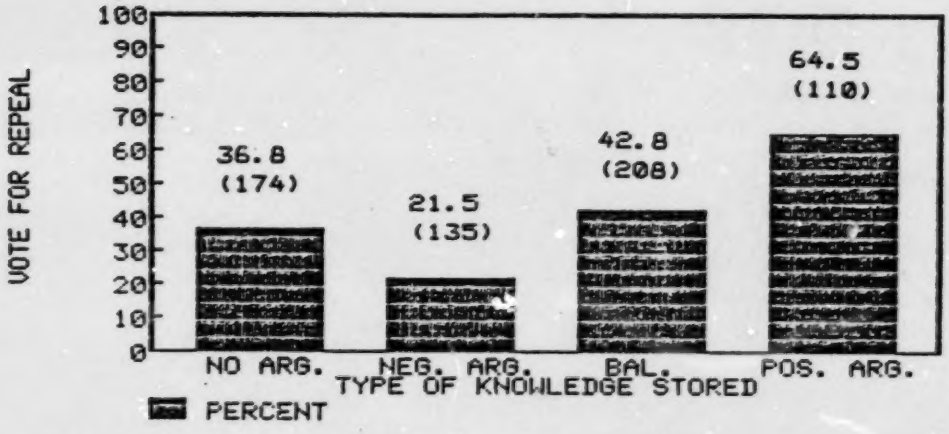
p(.05, one-tailed test.

Knowledge 1 is a measure of ability to identify local political figures, including mayoral candidates. Knowledge 2 is a measure of ability to provide unstructured information about the two primary mayoral candidates, Knowledge 3 is a measure of ability to identify strengths and weaknesses of the two mayoral candidates, and Knowledge 4 is a measures of the ability to identify arguments for and against the tax repeal amendment.

(a)These measures were asked separately for the mayoral and tax repeal questions. The appropriate measure is employed in the row.

Figure 2

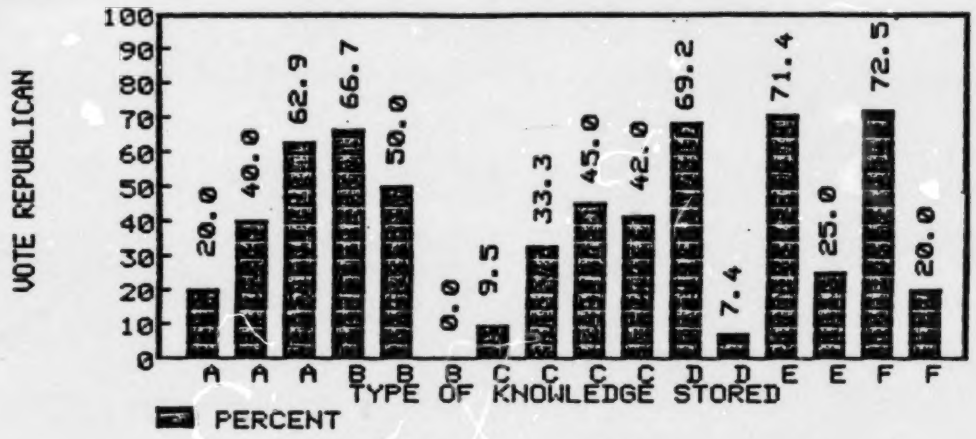
Tax-Repeal Vote by Type of Knowledge



No arg.: respondent could not identify any arguments for or against tax repeal issue.
Neg. arg.: respondent identified more negative than positive arguments.
Bal.: respondent identified same number of negative and positive arguments.
Pos. arg.: respondent identified more positive than negative arguments.

Figure 3

Mayoral Vote by Type of Knouledge



A1=No information on Democrat, negative information on Republican. (n=5)
A2=No information on Democrat, balanced information on Republican. (n=10)
A3=No information on Democrat, positive information on Republican. (n=70)
B1=Negative information on Democrat, no information on Republican. (n=3)
B2=Balanced information on Democrat, no information on Republican. (n=2)
B3=Positive information on Democrat, no information on Republican. (n=21)
C1=No information on either candidate. (n=241)
C2=Negative information on both candidates (n=3)
C3=Balanced information on both candidates (n=40)
C4=Positive information on both candidates (n=88)
D1=Negative information on Democrat, positive information on Republican. (n=26)
D2=Positive information on Democrat, negative information on Republican. (n=27)
E1=Negative information on Democrat, balanced information on Republican (n=7)
E2=Balanced information on Democrat, negative information on Republican. (n=8)
F1=Balanced information on Democrat, positive information on Republican. (n=40)
F2=Positive information on Democrat, balanced information on Republican. (n=35)

Table 8.

Uncertainty by Type of Knowledge: Tax-Repeal Issue.

	Type of Knowledge			
	None	Negative	Balanced	Positive
Decisional Difficulty:				
Low Uncertainty	44.0%	65.4%	71.9%	72.4%
High Uncertainty	56.0	34.6	28.1	27.6
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	(175)	(130)	(213)	(112)
Likelihood of Vote Change:				
Low Uncertainty	48.0%	73.0%	82.7%	82.1%
High Uncertainty	52.0	27.0	17.3	17.9
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	(175)	(130)	(213)	(112)

Type of Knowledge was created by subtracting the number of negative arguments a voter could state about the tax-repeal issue from the number of positive arguments stated. Voters who could state neither negative nor positive arguments are labeled no knowledge. Voters who could state an equal number of positive and negative arguments are labeled balanced.

Least Difficulty (Least Likely) is Low Uncertainty.

Table 9.

Uncertainty by Type of Knowledge: Mayoral Vote.

Group A1,A2,A3 - - No Information on Democrat

	Information on Republican		
	Negative	Balanced	Positive
Low Decisional Difficulty:	40%	50%	56.5%
Low Likelihood of Change:	40%	60%	60.9%
N	(5)	(10)	(69)

Group B1,B2,B3 - - No Information on Republican

	Information on Democrat		
	Negative	Balanced	Positive
Low Decisional Difficulty:	75.0%	50.0%	61.9%
Low Likelihood of Change:	75.0%	50.0%	66.6%
N	(3)	(2)	(21)

Group C1,C2,C3,C4 - - Information on Both Candidates

	Information on Both Candidates			
	None	Negative	Balanced	Positive
Low Decisional Difficulty:	19.9%	33.3%	75.6%	52.0%
Low Likelihood of Change:	23.3%	33.3%	73.4%	67.1%
N	(241)	(3)	(40)	(80)

Group D1,D2 - - Conflicting Information on Candidates

	Negative Information on Democrat + Positive Information on Republican	Positive Information on Democrat + Negative Information on Republican
Low Decisional Difficulty:	73.0%	77.8%
Low Likelihood of Change	76.9%	85.2%
N	(26)	(27)

(Table 9 continued next page)

Table 9 Continued.

Uncertainty by Type of Knowledge: Mayoral Vote.

Group E1,E2 & F1,F2 - - Mixed Information on Candidates

(E:)	Negative Information on Democrat + Balanced Information on Republican	Balanced Information on Democrat + Negative Information on Republican
Low Decisional Difficulty	71.4%	62.5%
Low Likelihood of Change:	100.0%	62.5%
N	(7)	(8)

(F:)	Balanced Information on Democrat + Positive Information on Republican	Positive Information on Democrat + Balanced Information on Republican
Low Decisional Difficulty:	75.0%	83.3%
Low Likelihood of Change:	80.0%	86.1%
N	(40)	(35)

Cell entries are the percent of respondents reporting least decisional difficulty (or least likelihood of vote change) - that is, low uncertainty. (The two uncertainty measures were dichotomized at about the median).

Type of Information was created by subtracting the number of weaknesses a voter could state about the candidate from the number of strengths stated. Voters who could state neither strengths or weaknesses are labeled no information. Voters who could state an equal number of strengths and weaknesss are labeled balanced.

For comparison, A,B,C,D,E,F groups are the same as in Figure 3.

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